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Forty-three Recollections of Imam Khomeini Relating to Prayers

43 recollections of Imam Khomeini relating to prayers (salaat) by individuals who spent time with him. The incidents emphasize the importance and love which the Imam gave to the Salaat.

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Foreword

In the name of God, the most Beneficent, the most Merciful

"Prayers are the safeguard of the nation"

Prayer instills a sense of tranquility in the heart and prevents us from committing bad deeds. It is a mercy from God and a means of remembering of Him. Remembering God is everything for mankind.

This book is a set of recollections of Imam Khomeini relating to prayers and his recommendations about prayers. Undoubtedly when prayers and its importance are discussed, one immediately remembers the day of Ashura. In the face of the enemies' arrows, Imam Hussein (a.s.) established prayers to teach us that all things should be for prayers.

Imam Khomeini at all times and under all conditions would never forget to pray on time. Even when he was in prison, when exiled, or when bed-ridden, he would always pray on time. He proved to the enemies of Islam that Iranians love praying and whatever they have is because of prayers.

We must take the actions and behaviors of this great leader as a model for ourselves. A leader who through his actions and behaviors taught us lessons of humanity, magnanimity, piety, servitude to God, and struggle against evil.

How good would it be therefore if this year, which has been named after this dear great personality, we familiarise ourselves more with his actions and behaviours. However much of his human perfection we make use of, by that amount we will find joy and tranquility.

For this reason, we have prepared a selection of recollections about prayers in relation to this great personality. We hope that the reader is able to benefit from these stories and thereby be able to pay more attention to their prayers.

Recollections

Clothes of prayer

A villager came to me asking for an item of Imam's clothing which he would have worn whilst saying his prayers.

I went to see the Imam. When I had finished my work with him, I said, "Someone has asked me for an item of your clothing which you have worn whilst saying your prayers." The Imam smiled and cheerfully said, "No problem". He then gave me his own cloak so that I could give it to the villager.

I was surprised at how kind such a great personality was as compared to others and that in the face of such a request how extremely cheerfully he behaved.

Ayatollah Mohamed Yazdi

Prayer and supplication

Amongst all of Imam's duties and responsibilities, he gave great importance to reciting Quran and supplications and to praying on time. Imam would recite Quran between three and five times daily. During the Holy month of Ramadhan he would complete the recitation of the Quran thrice.

Mostly he would recite supplications from Mafaatihul Jinaan. On Thursday nights he would recite Dua-Kumail.

I remember one day before Imam passed away, one of the ladies of his household asked me to sit besides him and recite a supplication. I recited Dua-e-Adeela which is appropriate at the time of death. I read it from Imam's Mafaatihul Jinaan. Whilst reading, I noticed a page marked in the book. I saw that it was Dua-Ahad that had been marked. This is the supplication that if some recites for 40 days they will arise from their grave at the time of the coming of Imam Mehdi (a.s) and will be able to meet him.

Ayatollah Tawassuli

Quran and Prayers

Imam would always recite Quran before the time of prayer set in. As soon as the time of prayer set in, he would immediately recite his prayers with humility and presence of the heart. After saying his prayers, Imam would always recite supplications in a soft whisper.

Hujjat al-Islam Aashtiyani

Carefully

When Imam would wake in the middle of the night to recite the Namaz-e-Shab he would light the way ahead with a small torch. He would never switch on the room light and would always move about quietly so as not to wake anyone else.

Such was the extent that Imam considered the rights of others. He would always have regard for Islamic laws and behaviours.

Agha Bourujardi – Imam's son in law

Supplication after prayers

After each prayer, Imam would recite Takbir 3 times. He would then recite the Tasbeeh of Hazarat Fatema (a.s.) (34 times Allahu Akber (God is Great), 33 times Alhamdulillah (Praise be to God), 33 times Subhanallah (Glory be to God)), followed by Sura Fateha and Ayatul Kursi. He would then recite verses 18, 26, and 27 of Sura Aal-e-Imraan.

Agha Maseeh Bourujardi – Imam's grandson

Devotion to Imam Hussein (a.s.)

Imam had great affection and respect for the Master of Martyrs. Before and after each prayer he would send his salutations to Imam Hussein (a.s.). With his Salaams and Ziyaraats, he would show his sincerity to Imam Hussein (a.s.).

Agha Ahmad Bahai al-Din

Paternal concern

Imam believed that children should be taught right and wrong and Islamic laws before they became Baaligh.

Occasionally Imam would ask my 8 year old son, "Have you said your prayers?" I would reply, "Agha, he is not as yet Baaligh." Imam would say, "Children should form a habit of praying before they become Baaligh."

Each time Imam would see a child, he would ask, "Have you prayed?" If the child had not prayed, he would give them his own prayer mat and would say, "Go and do your wudhu and quickly say prayers." After they had finished praying, he would say, "How much better it would have been had you prayed on time. Allah would have been more pleased."

Mrs Fatema Tabatabai – Imam's daughter in law.

A Bomb at Friday prayers

I had gone for the Friday Prayers in Tehran on the occasion that a bomb had been planted there. My mother who was at the Imam's house at the time became really worried as I was late returning back.

When I finally got home, she said to me, "Why did you go for the Friday prayers especially as you are pregnant? For the sake of your child you should not have gone. It was common knowledge that there would be bombings at places of prayer."

My mother had been worried for this reason. However Imam who was sitting at the table having lunch laughed and said to me, "Are you ok? Thank God." Then Imam whispered in my ear, "It was a very good thing you did in going. You have made me very pleased that you went to such a prayer."

Mrs Zahra Ashraqi – Imam's granddaughter

Questioning about prayers

Once when I was a child, I went and stood behind the Imam whilst he was saying his prayers copying all of the actions he performed. After the prayers he gave me several volumes of books especially for children.

After that, every time I would go to his room or he would see me, he would first ask me whether I had recited my prayers or not. If I had, he would congratulate me. If I had not, he would tell me to go and pray and advise me to recite my prayers on time.

Imam's grandchild

Call and action of our travel companion

At home, whenever we would observe the Imam do something, we would try and copy that action. We would always try to be like the Imam. He was a role model for us in terms of training and education.

Whenever he would tell us not to do something, we would notice that he would also not do that thing. We would also therefore not do that thing.

When he would give us advice on prayers, he himself half an hour before the midday prayers would perform his wudhu and busy himself in supplications. This had a great effect on us.

During winter, on mornings that I would have to get up in order to do wudhu, Imam would bring me some warm water and would say: "Do your wudhu with this warm water."

Mrs Fareeda Mustafawi – Imam's daughter.

Quran and Mafaati

Every night, Imam would pray Namaz-e-Shab and would usually wake up an hour before Azaan to pray. If time remained before Azaan, he would read newspapers and would listen to overseas radio broadcasts.

Imam gave great importance to listening to the news. He wanted to know what other countries were thinking about Iran. Even when the Imam was in hospital, the radio was always by his side and he would listen to the news.

The Quran and the Mafaati were also always by his side. Even in the hospital until his last day, the Quran and the Mafaati were by his bedside and he would recite them as per his usual routine.

People saw from television pictures that right until Imam was put on a drip, he would say his prayers with sincerity and presence of heart.

One of Imam's relatives narrates: "Once just before the time of Fajr prayers, I entered the Imam's room in the hospital. I found him in an unusual state. He had been crying so much that his whole face was wet with tears. Such was Imam whispering and supplicating to God that it left a profound impression on me.

Hujjatal Islam Ashtiyani

Imam and the prayers of children

I had just become baaligh during the time Imam was under the watch of Shah's agents in Tehran. One day, my family and I had gone to Ketri to see the Imam. He was reciting the Magrib and Isha prayers. All the members of my family and some others stood for prayers behind the Imam. No one wanted to miss praying congregational prayers behind him.

I was but a child then and by the time I had performed my wudhu, the Imam had finished sajdah of the first rakaat. Incorrectly, I joined the prayers at that moment copying the Imam's actions. My mother signalled to me that my prayers were not correct but I carried on praying.

After the Magrib prayer my mother said, "Your prayer was not correct. You must pray your Magrib prayers again. Then you can join the Imam for Isha." I was very upset. Crying I went to Imam. He was reciting supplications between the Magrib and Isha prayers.

My mother also came near the Imam and said, "Whatever I say to this child, she does not listen. I think she will only listen to you. She says that if Imam sees her then he will accept her prayers". A number of people were sitting next to the Imam. My mother said to me, "Don't bother the Imam." However Imam said, "I will certainly explain to her till she understands." Then, for a period of about 15 or 20 minutes, Imam proceeded to explain to me whilst everyone waited for the Imam to continue the prayers.

Mrs Mariam Pashedekeh

Prayers whilst ill

One of the physicians in Qum narrates: When we heard that Imam was suffering with a heart problem, I myself went to his bedside and measured his blood pressure. The Imam's blood pressure was very low and from a medical viewpoint was very critical. I quickly gave the Imam emergency treatment. After two hours, his condition had improved slightly but remained critical. At that time, I saw that Imam had gotten up from his place.

I asked the Imam why he had gotten up. He replied that it was for prayers. I said to him, "In the field of Islamic jurisprudence, you are a Mujtahid. However, in the medical field, I am a specialist. In my opinion, moving about for you is haraam. It is better that you pray lying down." Imam quickly heeded my words.

Mrs Fatema Tabatabai – Imam's daughter-in-law

Prayers in the hospital

In the last few days of the Imam's life, when he was taken to the hospital, his first order was that he should be told whenever the time of prayers had set in.

During one of those days, a tray of food was brought to his room. Imam asked, "Has the time of prayers set in?" Those present replied, "Yes, it is already the time for prayers." Very sternly, Imam said to those around him, "So why did you not wake me?" They replied, "We were concerned about your health." Imam unhappily said, "Take the food away until I have said my prayers."

Hujjatul Islam Jamaaraani

Meeting with God

Imam would wear his cleanest clothes whilst saying his prayers. After doing his wudhu, he would comb his blessed beard, would apply perfume, wear his turban, then stand for prayers. Right up until the time Imam became ill after he was operated on he would wear his cleanest clothes for prayers.

Agha Mu'tamadi

Prayers until the end

A day before Imam passed away, he prayed his Zohr and Asr prayers having done wudhu. As of one hour before the time of Zohr, he would ask anyone who passed by as to how much time remained before Zohr. His aim was to make sure he said his prayers on time.

At 3.30 in the afternoon, Imam became unconscious. The doctors tried to revive him. At around Magrib time, the doctors knowing that Imam had a deep attachment with prayers, called to him and said, "Agha, it is the time for prayers." Imam, who was still unconscious at the time, responded to this call with a movement. Then, with the motion of his hands and eyebrows, he proceeded to pray the Magrib prayers.

Mrs Farishteh I'rabi

Teaching students

Imam was very particular about praying on time. Imam would get very upset if a student in his class said his prayers late. I too was a student of Imam's. Imam was so particular about prayer that and I too tried hard to pray on time so that I would not be deprived of the opportunity of sitting in his classes.

Ayatollah Khalkhali – Imam's student

Prayers in youth

Imam used to say, " When I was young I would go out of town on Thursdays and Fridays with my friends for a break. Our destination would often be Jamkaran. During the snowy and rainy seasons we would sit in our room talking. However, when we would hear the call of the Muedhin, we would all stand for prayers.

Ayatollah Subhani – Imam's student

Prayers on time

Even in his youth, Imam would say his prayers on time. One of his friends narrates: At first, God forbid, we used to think that perhaps it was out of self pretentiousness that Imam would pray on time. For this reason we decided to test Imam.

For example, when on a journey, we would lay out food right at prayer time. However Imam would say, "You eat. I am saying my prayers and will eat whatever is leftover." Or, when setting out on a journey, we would decide to set out right at prayer time. However, Imam would say, "You go. I will catch up with you."

Many of these occasions transpired. Not only would Imam always say his prayers on time, but he instilled this practice in us to such an extent that we now always say our prayers on time.

Ayatollah Ibaadi – Imam's student

Lover of the night

One year, it snowed so much in Qum that half the town was flooded. That year, I witnessed that every night in the Fiziye school, Imam, no matter how hard, would break the ice in the fountain and would do his wudhu. Then, in the dark of night, he would say his prayers with sincerity. Till now, I am unable to explain how he was able to be so happy at that time.

This lover of the night would stay awake till the Adhaan of the dawn prayers reciting supplications. At the time of Adhaan, he would go to the Haraam of Hazarat Masuma (as) and in the mosque of Mosque of Balaa Sar, he would say his prayers behind Agha Mirza Jawadi Aqaamalaqi. After prayers he would study. I am able to say that in terms of worship, there were very few like him amongst the religious scholars.

Ayatollah Khaansaari

Travel companion

I have travelled many times with Imam. Only God knows how on journeys he was like a father to us. To such an extent, that every time I recall those times I am moved.

Once I went with Imam to Mashad for the Ziyarat of Imam Raza (a.s.). At that time, parts of Iran were under the control of Russia, America, and England. On the way back from Mashad, in the middle of the journey, the Russians stopped our car for inspection and we were forced to get out.

Because Imam was always punctual about his prayers and would always wake for Namaz –e–Shab, he wanted to pray. We were in the middle of the desert and there was no water available. However, at one point we looked and water was flowing. Imam rolled up his sleeves and did wudhu. We did not know where he found this water or whether it was still there or not after prayers.

Shaheede Mihraab Ayatollah Sadooqi.

Congregational prayers

During Feberedin 1342 (english date?) on the occasion of the anniversary of the martyrdom of Imam Jaffer Sadiq (as), a mourning gathering was held in the house of Imam Khomeini at which he was also present. Suddenly a number of people wailing and chanting slogans entered the house.

They were those who had been wounded by the Shah's agents at the Fidhiyeh school. Some of them wanted to shut the door of the house. However Imam said, "Leave the door open." He then said to all those present, "Get ready for prayer.

How much better it would be if Shah's executioners attack whilst we are praying so that we can receive salvation. It would be a huge blow for them and an immense blessing for us."

Gulamhusein Ahmadi

Prayers in prison

Imam narrated: At the time when Shah's agents took me to Eshratabad prison, I wanted to do wudhu so that I could pray. They took me to a very remote place away from the prison to do wudhhoo. There I did wudhu and came back. The agents were very scared of me. They didn't even allow the officers and soldiers to look at me."

Ayatollah Khalkali – Imam's student

Prayers on the way to prison

Imam once told me: Once, Shah's agents burst into my house, arrested me, and took me towards Tehran. On the Qum–Tehran road I told them it was the time for the Fajr prayers and I asked them to stop at a place where I could do wudhu.

They replied that they did not have permission to do so. I said to them, "You are armed and I am weapon less. I won't be able to do anything." Again they said that they did not have permission. I knew it was pointless and they would not stop the car. I said, "At least stop for a while so that I can do Tayammum by the side of the road."

In the end they stopped the car. However, they did not let me get down. Whilst still sitting in the car, I bent down and did tayammum. I then said my prayers with my back facing Qibla.

That day I said my prayers with tayammum, my back towards Qibla, and in a moving vehicle. Perhaps those two rakaat prayers will achieve God's pleasure.

Mrs Farida Mustafa – Imam's daughter

Suspension of congregational prayers

Despite his advanced age, Imam would fast the 18-hour fasts in the month of Ramadhan in the 50 degree temperatures of Najaf. He would break his fast after the Magrib and Isha congregational prayers.

Early one evening he found out that Shah's agents in Iraq wanted to execute a group of innocent people. As a protest, Imam suspended the congregational prayers. He called upon the governor of Najaf so that perhaps he could save the lives of some of those Muslims.

Hujjatal Islam Syed Hameed Ruhani

Respect for people's rights

During the period when Imam used to live in the Holy city of Najaf, he would often go to the Holy city of

Kerbala. There he would stay in a small house.

Whilst in Kerbala, he would say his Magrib and Isha prayers in the mosque of Ayatollah Bouroujardi and he would lead the Zohr and Asr congregational prayers at his house. The courtyard of his house was very small and the carpet was insufficient.

However because people had a great affinity for Imam, a large number of them would come for prayers laying out their prayer mats. When Imam would enter, he was very careful not to step on people's shoes and cloaks. Through his own actions, he taught how to respect the rights of people.

Ayatollah Qarhi

A Mosque is the people's home

During the period that Imam was in Najaf, a number of people from Iran took their Khums (Sehme Imam) money to him. It amounted to quite a sum. At that time, they asked Imam, "We want to build a mosque here in the local vicinity. Do you give us permission to spend some of this money to build it?" Imam replied: "No I do not give permission."

The people pleaded. Imam said, "Muslims of each vicinity should build their own mosque because mosques belong to them. I cannot give you this Sehme Imam to build the mosque. Does it make sense that I would pay for the mohrs you use? The mosque is your property. You have to meet its costs."

Ayatollah Ma'arifat

Shia of Ali (a.s.)

In all of the 15 years that Imam was in exile, he did not miss even one night going to the shrine of Hazarat Ali (a.s.), except when he was ill. Every night until dawn, Hazarat Imam would go to the Haraam and would stand for a long time reciting Ziyarat. When he would go to Kerbala, every morning and evening he would go and recite Ziyarat at the shrine of his grandfather Imam Hussein (a.s.) and the shrine of Hazarat Abbas.

Ayatollah Qadeeri – Imam's student

Tranquil Heart

None of us knew what would befall us on the night that it was agreed that Imam would go to Kuwait. It was not certain whether Kuwait would let us enter nor did we know what events lay in store for us. In Najaf, our house was quite a scene. Every moment was tense and worrying.

I focused my attention on Imam (?). Just as in previous nights he slept on time and as always one and a half hours before the Fajr Adhaan he woke for prayers.

Haj Ahmed Agha Khomeini – Imam's son.

God's guest

Haj Ahmed Agha narrates: One night during the month of Ramadhan, I was sleeping on the rooftop. Imam's house was small being only 45 square metres. I woke up and heard a sound. I realised that Imam was saying his prayers in the dark. His hands were stretched out towards the sky and he was crying.

During Ramadhan, it was Imam's routine that he would stay awake until dawn reciting prayers and supplications. After the dawn prayers he would rest a little and then get ready for his work.

Hujjatal Islam Nasari

Prayers on the road to Kuwait

When the Ba'ath regime in Iraq put pressure on Imam, he headed towards the Kuwaiti border. On the way, it was approaching the time of the Zohr prayers when we arrived at a mosque. Imam asked, "Does this mosque have an Imam for congregational prayers?". Imam was told it did. Imam said to his companions, "We either pray congregational prayers behind the Imam or we should go elsewhere to pray because if we want to wait to pray by ourselves in the mosque it will be an insult to the Imam."

We set out till we reached one of the borders between Iraq and Kuwait. Friends went to see to the border control requirements and Imam wanted to pray in a room. Suddenly his eyes fell on a huge picture of Saddam Hussein that was on the wall of the room. Imam said, "Lets go somewhere else to

pray."

Truly how so very careful Imam was. In places where it was necessary to protect the respect of a religious scholar, he was very careful not to be disrespectful. And in places where it was essential not to show respect to tyrants, he said, "Let us leave this place."

Hujjatal Islam Naasari – Imam's student

Tired body, alive mind

We wanted to leave Iraq for Kuwait. At the border, the Kuwaitis would not let us enter. At that time Imam was 80 years old. We had left Najaf at 5 am in the morning. When the Kuwaitis would not let us enter, we had no choice but to return to the Iraqi border. There they treated Imam very badly. They didn't even give him a room in which he could rest. In the end, Imam laid out his cloak on the floor and lay down.

After an hour, orders came from Baghdad that we had to go to Basra. We arrived in Basra at one o'clock after midnight and Imam slept at two o'clock. It was not long before an alarm clock rang. It was four o'clock in the morning. I saw that Imam was getting up for Namaz-e-shab. Truly how wonderful it was. A man 80 years of age who from 5 the previous morning till 2 at night had not slept remembered to set his alarm before going to sleep so that he could get up for Namaz-e-shab.

Hujjatal Islam Haj Ahmed Agha Khomeini – Imam's son

The sentiment of the worshipper

The weather was fine the first few days during the time Imam was in Paris. For this reason, there was no need for sleeping blankets during the night, though some of the brothers would use them. Certainly, the windows and the doors were left open.

One morning when I got up, I noticed that the windows were closed and that the brothers who did not usually cover themselves with blankets had blankets draped over them. No one knew how this had happened. Even Haj Ahmed Agha did not know when we asked him. Later, we found out that Imam, who had woken up in the middle of the night to do wudhu, had shut the windows and covered the brothers with blankets because it had been cold.

Hujjatal Islam Duayee – Imam's student

The Day the Shah fled

We were in Paris the day the Shah fled from Iran. The French police closed the main road of Neuphille Chateau. News reporters from various countries from Asia, Africa, Europe, and America had gathered. There were over 150 reporters with cameras present ready to film.

The Shah had gone and the reporters wanted to know what Imam was going to do. Imam had been sitting on a chair and talked for a few minutes. I was standing beside him. Suddenly, he turned around and asked me: "Ahmed, is it Zohr time yet?" I replied that it was. Without hesitation, Imam said: "Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you."

It can be seen how quickly Imam cut short his conversation. So particular was Imam about saying his prayers on time that right when the world's press was broadcasting Imam's remarks which millions of people were watching, he cut short his talk and went off to pray.

Marhum Haj Ahmed Agha khomeini – Imam's son

Organised

Imam was very organised in everything he did – whilst reading books and newspapers, whilst reading letters, whilst in meetings, and even whilst doing wudhu. We all would know precisely at what time Imam would do his wudhu because he used to do it at a particular time. Imam was also so particular about praying on time that the French police would set their watches by the times that Imam would stand for prayer.

Mrs Marziya Hadeedechi

Meeting with the leaders of Muslim Countries

The leaders of some Muslim countries came to meet Imam for peace talks in relation to the Iran–Iraq war. During the meeting, the call to prayer was heard. Imam stood up and said, "I want to pray." He then applied some perfume and stood for prayers. The leaders of the Muslim countries also stood for

congregational prayers behind Imam. Such was Imam that on no account would he let the value of this important religious duty be lessened.

Ayatollah Tusali – Imam's student

Allah takes pride in the worship of the youth

One of Imam's relatives narrates: Right from the time we used to live in Khomein, Imam from the age of 15 would recite Namaz-e-shab. So as not to wake anyone else at that time of night, Imam would use a small lamp to light his way. He would then go to a corner of the house and say his prayers.

Imam's wife would say, "I was never once woken up by Imam praying Namaz-e-Shab because he would never switch on the room light. When he would go do wudhu, he would place a sponge in the sink under the tap so that the sound of the falling water would not wake me.

Mrs Naeemeh Ashraqi – Imam's granddaughter

The lover's weeping

During the last month of Imam's life, he was ill and in need of increased supervision. During the nights, a soldier would sleep just outside the door to Imam's room. Once I asked that soldier whether he had any recollections of Imam from the period when he used to watch over him.

The soldier narrates: Imam would normally wake up 2 hours before the time of the Fajr prayer. One night I heard Imam crying loudly. I also started crying. When Imam came out of his room in order to refresh his wudhu, he noticed me and said, "Oh soldier. Value your youth and worship God. The pleasure of worship is in youth. When you get old, your heart will want to worship, but you will not have the health and strength to do so."

Ayatollah Tawasulli

Friday Etiquette

A group of American reporters had come to Paris to interview Imam. It was agreed that the interview would be a live broadcast. If the interview took place, then European countries would also want to

interview Imam. Imam's message and the call of revolution would be able to reach the world.

I went to see the Imam and informed him of the situation. Imam said: "Today is Friday and it is the time of performing the recommended etiquettes (Friday supplication, bath, et)." When Imam had completed these Friday acts of worship, he said: "Now I am ready for the interview."

Mrs Marziya Hadeedechi

Namaz-e-Shab on the airplane

It was the night of the 12th of Bahman 1357 (eng date?). The aeroplane of the revolution was flying from France towards Iran. It was 3 hours since we had left Paris. Suddenly Imam rose from the place where he was sitting and went to the front of the plane in order to pray. His face was truly shining and a halo of light could be seen around it. I swear that I saw that halo of light around the perimeter of his face. Imam went for prayers with complete tranquillity. The rest of us however were worried. We did not know what lay in wait for us. I myself was not even able to sleep.

Agha Kuffash Bashi

Tehran in unrest. Imam calm

On the 21st of Bahman 1357 (eng date?), military rule was declared. Through the orders of Imam, people overthrew the military rule and poured onto the streets.

That night, worry could be seen on the faces of some of Imam's friends and relatives. They were worried in case Shah's regime would savagely attack putting Imam's life in danger.

In the end, a few of Imam's relatives approached him and urged him to go to a safe place. Imam in a state of complete calm said: "I am not leaving here." Then, just as in previous nights, he prayed Namaz-e-Shab and passed the night in complete tranquillity.

Hujjatal Islam Ashtiyani

The Time for Meeting with God

A meeting with the President, Leader of Parliament, and army commanders had been arranged in Imam's small room.

Imam was sitting on a chair and we were seated on the carpet facing him. After an hour of talks, it was the turn of one of the commanders to present his report. Suddenly Imam stood up in order to leave the room. We were all surprised by this. The person whose turn it was to present his report also did not know what to say.

Agha Hashemi Rafsanjani asked Imam, "Did something happen to make you unwell?" Imam quickly replied, "No. It is the time of prayers." We looked at our watches. I knew the prayer times in Tehran from before. I noticed that Imam had not even delayed a moment in order to pray. In any case the Imam's behaviour had a profound effect on us. Imam stood for prayers and we quickly got ready and prayed with him.

After prayers, a question struck me. How in a meeting of such importance about the war, could Imam leave in order to pray? He did not even allow the commander to complete his report. That day I understood how high Imam's level of worship and submission of his soul was that he was not willing to delay saying his prayers even for a moment.

Shaheed Siyaad Shirazi

Care with the use of water

I had on a number of occasions seen Imam doing wudhu. In between each of the actions of wudhu, Imam would close the tap for fear of wasting water. Only when it was necessary would he open the tap. Many of us do not take care not to waste water. Whereas when Imam wanted to do wudhu, he took a lot of care to make sure water was not wasted.

Agha Mahmood Bouroujardi—Imam's son in law

Glossary

This glossary has been compiled to assist readers not familiar with Islamic terminology in understanding the above recollections.

(a.s.)

Short for 'peace be upon him.'

Adhaan

Call to prayers

Ashura

10th of Muharram in the Islamic calendar. This is the day the 3rd Imam of the Shias, Imam Hussein (a.s.) was martyred in the Islamic year 63 A.H.

Ayatul Kursi

Verses 255–257 of the second chapter of the Holy Quran.

Baaligh

Age at which certain actions and duties become compulsory for Muslims. Typically this is approximately 9 years for girls and 15 years for boys.

Haram

Any sacred religious place particularly used for Shrines of a religious personalities.

Imam Hussein (a.s)

3rd successor of the Holy Prophet for Shia Muslims.

Khums

Compulsory tax to be paid by Muslims representing one-fifth of savings.

Mashad

City in North–Eastern Iran where the 8th successor of the Holy Prophet for Shias (Imam Raza (a.s.)) is buried.

Mohr

Prayer tablets upon which mainly Shia Muslims prostrate whilst praying.

Namaz-e-Shab

Also known as Salaatul-Layl. Recommended prayers of 11 units to be recited before the dawn prayers.

Prayers (Fajr, Zohr, Ast, Magrib, Isha)

Names of the 5 compulsory daily prayers for Muslims consisting of 2, 4, 4, 3, and 4 rakaats respectively.

Qibla

Direction towards Mecca which Muslims face to pray.

Qum

City in Northern Iran. Centre for religious learning.

Quran

Muslim Holy Book revealed by God to Prophet Muhammad

Rakaat

Unit of prayer

Ramadhan

Ninth month of the Islamic calendar in which fasting has been prescribed for Muslims.

Salaam and Ziyaraats

Prescribed greetings and prayers salutations usually recited when visiting the shrines of the Prophet and Imams.

Sura Aal-e-Imran

Third chapter of the Holy Quran

Sura Fateha

First chapter of the Holy Quran

Tasbih

Glorification of God

Tayammum

Actions to be performed when no water is available for the performance of wudhoo.

Wudhu

Ablutions performed before reciting prayers.

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